


*Church of the Good Shepherd*

**50** YEARS

*Waban, Massachusetts*





FIFTY YEARS

*1896-1946*

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IN THE year 1886, Waban was a small community of hardly more than a dozen houses. There were the three so-called Collins houses, the old Locke house, the City Poor Farm, and the Hawkes farm on Beacon Street, the old Woodward house, the second oldest house in Newton, built about 1694, and two other houses on Woodward Street. The lovely old house on the corner of Beacon Street and Windsor Road was then occupied by Mr. William C. Strong and is now the Episcopal Rectory, and there were a few other scattered houses and farms. In 1888, after the completion of the railroad, the Savilles, the Harlows, and the Davidsons built homes on Windsor Road, and were quickly followed by several other families.

For several years a few of the people who owned horses and carriages were accustomed on Sundays to attend church in some of the neighboring villages, but only a few of them possessed conveyances of this kind. Finally, fathers and mothers began to regret that they had no convenient church privileges for their children as they were growing up. How could they teach their boys and girls habits of churchgoing? Ought they to be satisfied to live in a locality where the people never assembled on Sundays for public worship? These and many similar expressions on the subject found frequent utterance as they met one another in a social way.

This spirit of unrest made itself manifest more and more, until finally, sometime in 1894 or 1895, they met and started their first religious association, "The Waban Christian Union."

During certain months in the year, religious services on Sunday afternoons were held in Waban Hall, which was a small hall over the stores in what is now Fyfe's block. Different clergymen in Newton or vicinity were hired to officiate and all denominations were represented in these supplies. While the idea was new the services were fairly well attended, but after a time, when the novelty had worn away and when they had heard all the clergymen, the interest flagged, for they had not centralized their religious affections around any one of them. It was with difficulty that they obtained the small amount of money necessary to meet their expenses. Finally from lack of interest and support it became evident that the services had better be suspended.

At that time the Waban Improvement Society and the Waban

Christian Union were the two organizations which stood for the higher life of the village. On April 16, 1896, there was held a union meeting of these societies for the purpose of considering the erection of a church building. At that meeting, Mr. W. C. Strong reported for the committee of the combined societies as follows: "that they had decided unanimously that an organization should be formed for building a chapel in Waban, for the services at present of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and that the committee also recommended that an edifice be built that should be an ornament to the village, and one large enough for the rapid growth of the place."

After a full discussion it was voted by a large majority to have the Episcopal form of service and organization as the most satisfactory meeting ground of the denominations represented, there being present at that time Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Unitarians, Episcopalians, Lutherans, one Seventh Day Adventist, and a Roman Catholic.

This meeting was adjourned to April 22, 1896, at which time thirty-three persons were present, and it was voted to form the Waban Church Corporation under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. \$2400 was reported as pledged for the new church building, and Messrs. Harlow, Webster, and Goodwin, Mrs. Gould, Mrs. Cloutman and Miss Strong were chosen the building committee.

The following were the charter members of the Corporation: Alex Davidson, John E. Heymer, John H. Robinson, Charles V. Campbell, Albert P. Locke, Bertram S. Cloutman, William Saville, Marion E. Y. Saville, Elizabeth Cushman, Nellie R. Fish, Carrie R. Campbell, Fannie T. C. Buffum, Alice A. Gould, William H. Gould, Frank A. Childs, Thatcher Raymond, Julia A. Harlow, Louis K. Harlow, Arthur B. Harlow, Wm. F. Goodwin, Charlotte G. Davidson, Louis H. Bacon, Charles J. Page, James E. Morse, Arthur W. Vose, Charles E. Fish, and Charles J. Buffum.

At subsequent meetings the organization was completed by electing officers, adopting by-laws, and transacting other business incident to the erection of the new church.

The land was given jointly by Mr. Wm. C. Strong and the City of Newton.

The artistic church on Beacon Street was erected during the sum-

mer of 1896 at a cost of about \$5000, on which there was a mortgage of \$3000.

The property was held in trust for the Waban Church Corporation by Messrs. W. C. Strong, Amasa Barnes, and Edwin A. Phelps — three gentlemen not members of the corporation. On October 9, 1896, the directors voted to engage Rev. William Hall Williams as rector. He was then teaching at the Fish School for Boys, which was on Beacon Street, almost directly across the street from the church. The position of Rev. Mr. Williams was at once an anomalous one — the Church was not a mission, nor was it a regularly organized parish according to the laws of the Episcopal Church, and Mr. Williams was ministering by the permission of the Bishop according to the manner of the Church's expression to an independent congregation. By Mr. Williams' efforts the Parish of the Church of the Good Shepherd was organized with Wardens and Vestry, becoming at once independent of the Waban Church Corporation, and renting the building for the use of the Church property at the annual rental of \$200 and water taxes. A glance at the Constitution and By-Laws of the Parish as it was formed in 1896 shows us that while it was apparently an Episcopal Church it claimed no allegiance to the Diocese, nor to the Episcopal Church as a whole.

Mr. Goodwin, the architect, donated his services. An amusing incident happened during the building of the church. Someone donated a stone wall to be used as the fieldstone foundation. Workmen removed the stones, but entirely demolished a wrong stone wall before the mistake was discovered. The owner of the wall in question was not pleased, but after considerable discussion the matter was straightened out.

All the Chancel furnishings were given. The school children held a fair and gave the pulpit, Mr. Heymer and his Bible class gave the Lectern, Mrs. A. E. Phelps gave the Communion service, Mrs. William Saville gave the Tiffany Memorial Window of the Good Shepherd. Rev. Mr. Williams and his brother gave the altar, Mr. Louis K. Harlow gave a fifteenth-century cathedral lamp, and Mrs. C. B. McGee, the Bible, Prayer Book and Hymnal for the altar. The baptismal font was purchased by the proceeds of a musicale and silver tea given by Mrs. B. S. Cloutman.



The carpenters finished screwing the pews in place at sundown on December 24th. The first service was held on Christmas Day, 1896, after a flurry of excitement created by one of the ladies of the church who had so carefully hidden the Communion service that it could not be found for several hours.



The services were impressive and solemn, after the Episcopal form. The service was conducted by the rector, Rev. William Hall Williams, and Professor Drown of the Theological Seminary, Cambridge, delivered the address. Miss Florence Wood sang the anthem "Glory to Heaven's Eternal King." The Chalice used at this service has been used every Christmas since 1896.

During the next few years the church continued as the center of the social and religious activities of the town. Waban was still a small community with few outside interests, and everyone worked enthusiastically on bazaars, entertainments, minstrel shows, oyster stew suppers and other church suppers held in Waban Hall. At the end of the first year, 1897, the Parish had raised over \$2100, paying the minister \$1500 and the Corporation \$300 as the annual rental. Materially the Parish prospered, and the people were loyal and gen-



erous in their support. Spiritually the records show that Mr. Williams' efforts were successful: seven were baptised and six confirmed during that first year.

In 1904 Mr. Williams resigned and went to Texas. For a period of nearly six months after his departure there was no settled minister until Rev. James Clement Sharp accepted the ministry, and preached his first sermon on January 23, 1905. It was during this time that there was formed by certain individuals, who preferred a service other than the Episcopal form, another Union body, now known and incorporated as the Waban Union Church Society. Thus a few months before Mr. Sharp became the minister another religious organization was formed, and from that time, the fall of 1904, the two Parishes ministered to the people of this community. Until 1907 neither the Vestry nor the members of the Parish deemed it wise to take up the matter of creating a regular Episcopal Church. It meant at once the solving of the problem of the possession of the Church property which was held by the Corporation and for which the Parish was continuing to pay the annual rental of \$300. In the fall of 1907 some twenty-eight members of the Parish subscribed the sum of \$1000 to be paid to the Waban Church Corporation, and to be paid by them to the present Waban Union Church Society. In 1908 the Parish voted to give this sum of \$1000 to the Union Church through the Corporation. A new Constitution and By-Laws, approved by the Standing Committee and the Bishop, was adopted, and on April 28, 1908, by an Act of the Legislature, and by the signature of the Governor of the Commonwealth, the Waban Church Corporation was given the right to surrender the church building and land and all title thereto to the Parish of the Church of the Good Shepherd, to accept the \$1000, and to pay the same to the present Union Church Society to be used by them for building purposes. This \$1000 represented one half of the original \$2000 raised by subscription in 1896. Thereby the Corporation, after twelve years of life, was declared to be dissolved. Meanwhile the Parish of the Good Shepherd was incorporated and as such today holds the property, and is regularly and canonically established as the Protestant Episcopal Church in Waban.

In 1904 the Women's Guild was organized. This replaced the informal Ladies' Aid Society which had been meeting since September

1897. The Guild still continues to meet every two weeks in the Crypt.

On February 20, 1897, the Chancel Committee met for the first time to make the surplices and collect money for flowers. The first gift was the wardrobe for the sacristy. It became the Altar Society in May, 1905. Also under Mr. Sharp's leadership the Junior Auxiliary for girls was organized and flourished for several years.

In 1915, the property at 406 Woodward Street was purchased for the sum of \$7500. This was the first rectory.

On the 24th of September, 1916, Bishop William Lawrence consecrated the church, it being free of debt and then the youngest Episcopal church in Newton. Bishop Lawrence was assisted by Mr. Sharp and the Rev. Albert Crabtree, Diocesan Chaplain of Massachusetts. Mr. Edmund Winchester, the Senior Warden, read the instrument of donation. The consecration followed. There were extensive plans made at this time for a new parish house.

On June 24, 1920, Mr. Sharp tendered his resignation as rector. He had been in poor health for some time following a severe automobile accident and sunstroke suffered while working in his war garden. His resignation was regretfully accepted.

The Reverend William Lawrence Wood was then called to be the rector, and accepted in December, 1920. The rectory on Woodward Street was not large enough for Mr. Wood and his family of four children; so the property was sold and the house at the corner of Windsor Road and Beacon Street was purchased, and has been in use ever since as the rectory.

In June, 1921, plans were completed for the raising of the church and building the present parish rooms in the Crypt, at a cost of approximately \$17,000. \$11,000 was in the building fund at the time. Mr. Stetson, Mr. Gates, and Mrs. Souther were appointed House Committee to have charge of the parish rooms. Mr. Charles C. Coveney of Boston was the architect.

Mr. Wood resigned in January 1926, and left for California to teach in the Theological School there. Bishop Frank Hale Touret, former Bishop of Idaho, a personal friend of Mr. Wood, accepted the call of the Parish and assumed his duties in the fall of 1926. Bishop Touret stayed only two years, and resigned in November 1928, because of ill health.

Mr. Richard Tuttle Loring was immediately considered as a possible candidate to succeed Bishop Touret, but Bishop Slattery thought that as Mr. Loring was still at the Theological Seminary and not yet Ordained Priest, he should not be called as rector before June. Rev. William L. Wood, who had returned from California and was living in Cambridge, was asked to take the services for the winter.

The Reverend Richard Tuttle Loring became the rector in June, 1929, and remained until March, 1937. It was during these eight years that the sacristy was remodeled, the Chancel was paneled, and many beautiful vestments were given. Mrs. Loring embroidered several of the vestments and hangings which are now used, and the hand-wrought amethyst-studded silver Chalice and Paten were given to the Parish by Father Loring on his departure. Father Loring accepted a call to St. David's Church in Baltimore, Maryland, in March, 1937.

On March 30, 1937, the Vestry unanimously voted to call the Reverend Stanley W. Ellis to be the rector. He was then assistant at St. Paul's Cathedral, Boston. He preached his first sermon as the rector on June 6, 1937.

Such is the history of our Parish through 1940. The last few years are too recent to be classed as history, and I shall leave them to be recorded by the historian of twenty-five years hence. However, there are a few anecdotes which may be added in closing. They were told to me by the people involved, and I am sure they would have no objection to the retelling.

Mrs. Saville was the lady who mislaid the Communion silver. In the early days there was no Altar Guild and each Communion Sunday after the service the silver was carefully packed in a basket and carried home by some member. It is easy to see how it could be too carefully hidden.

Mr. Saville was the unknowing cause of one of my own family jokes. My grandmother, Mrs. L. K. Harlow, had been given a bottle of sixty-year-old port by a friend who was a sea captain. To my grandfather's disgust she firmly announced that the port was to be saved for some suitable occasion, and she hoarded this bottle for two years. One Sunday morning Mr. Saville came rushing into the house calling excitedly, "Louis, have you any wine? It is Communion Sunday, and we haven't a drop in our house." "Oh," said my grandfather, "I

haven't any, but my wife has a bottle of port." The cherished bottle was produced, and the good people of Waban little knew what was in the Chalice that morning. My grandmother forgave her husband, but she never forgot the incident. She was still telling the story forty years later.

When Mr. Williams was the rector the men of Waban arranged a minstrel show. They rehearsed for weeks, printed playbills, and started to sell tickets, when suddenly Mr. Williams announced that he could not accept money for the church if raised in such an undignified manner. It was too late to abandon the project, so the show went on. The problem of the disposal of the proceeds was a little embarrassing, however; but finally, after much consideration the money was divided up, and quietly placed in the contribution plate by the various members. Mr. Williams may have wondered at the sudden increase for a few Sundays, but he never made any comment.

This account of our first fifty years has been as carefully and accurately compiled as possible. Old records, sermons, newspaper articles and deeds have been consulted and checked. We are now entering a new era, and we sincerely hope that we may follow in the footsteps of those worthy and fine people who founded our Parish, and those others who have carried on through the years.



## SENIOR WARDENS

MR. CHARLES E. FISH . . . . .	1896-1898
MR. ROBERT W. PRATT . . . . .	1898-1899
MR. CHARLES H. CLARK . . . . .	1899-1900
MR. LEVI M. FLINT . . . . .	1900-1901
MR. H. W. KIMBALL . . . . .	1901-1904
MR. WILLIAM H. OAKES . . . . .	1904-1916
MR. EDMUND WINCHESTER . . . . .	1916-1937
MR. WALTER H. MEADOWS . . . . .	1937-1944
MR. ROGER PRESTON . . . . .	1944-1946
MR. WILLIAM ALBERT GALLUP . . . . .	1946

## WARDEN EMERITUS

MR. WALTER J. MEADOWS

## JUNIOR WARDENS

MR. ROBERT W. PRATT . . . . .	1896-1898
MR. LEVI M. FLINT . . . . .	1898-1900
MR. C. S. NORRIS . . . . .	1900-1902
MR. WM. SAVILLE . . . . .	1902-1905
MR. DONALD M. HILL . . . . .	1905-1909
MR. EDMUND WINCHESTER . . . . .	1909-1916
MR. DONALD M. HILL . . . . .	1916-1925
MR. WALTER J. MEADOWS . . . . .	1925-1937
MR. PHILIP VER PLANCK . . . . .	1937-1940
MR. ROGER PRESTON . . . . .	1940-1944
MR. WILLIAM ALBERT GALLUP . . . . .	1944-1946
MR. F. BRITAIN KENNEDY . . . . .	1946



